

retracts.

1842

RS 1612

21

Lady Franklin to her sister Mrs Simpson.

Government Cottage.
New Norfolk.

X My dearest Mary

1st January. 1842

On the 20th of November, the "Vindictive" 50 gun ship from China, Captain Joub Nicolas came in, bringing us the news of the termination of the war there, and of the "Cambrian" which she left at Amoy as guard ship much to the vexation of the officers: - but Frank as far as I can learn, was not personally known to any of the ~~officers~~ "Vindictives".

My illness began on the 27th November, and since my recovery I have been obliged to give myself as little excitement as possible, in order to prepare myself for a very trying day on board the "Vindictive" when the gunnery exercise was gone through, and there was a dejeuner which lasted until night. No one can tell what a trial it was to me, but I was determined to keep an engagement which Captain Nicolas declared to have ^{been} delayed on my account.

The day before this Fête, arrived the French Ship "le Rhin" of twenty guns commanded by Capt Bixard a very distinguished officer, and a man of great science, member of the Institute, and a great friend of Arago's, and of Mr Poulton from whom he brings a letter of

2

introduction dated in May last.

I am extremely pleased with him, for to his intellectual qualities, he joins great gentleness, quickness and modesty of manners and is particularly gentlemanly. I am only mortified that the comparison between him and Capt. Nicholas is so unfavourable to the latter. Not that Capt. N. is ungentlemanly or impolite, and if bowing and wriggling were indications of good manners, he would be better mannered than any Frenchman I have yet seen. Capt. Bérard is going to relieve our excellent friend Capt. Lavaud who was so excessively kind to me at Akaroa in New Zealand and was so anxious at that time to bring me back in his ship to Hobart. I wish he would give me a passage in it to South America if he is going home that way.

We have a splendid reputation (Pritchard and I) it seems amongst the French navy; we have been printed in books, and are spoken of from one French officer to another as people who will be sure to give them an honourable and kind reception.

Mr. Bérard told me that Lavaud had written to France an account of my visit to ^{Akaroa} Akaroa in the

"Favourite," and said in the communication he hoped I had been satisfied with his reception of me, for he had done his best. ^{His} ~~had~~ he certainly did. They ~~xxx~~ were living there on wild pigeons and fish, but at the dinner they gave us, their fates de Périgord, and preserved meats, and everything they had of the best was brought out. We added the roti ^{by} and making them a present of a sheep, and we are now going to send by Mr Bérard 10 fat sheep and their food, as a present to shew we have not forgotten them. P I don't know what could have led Mr

Bérard to come from Bahia here before he goes to New Zealand. I gave him the first news of poor Capt Hobson's death and also that New South Wales was no longer a penal colony and that this was now the great one. He is most pleased with the Magnetic Observatory. On the day we went on board the "Vindictive," the day after his arrival after having with his train of officers paid his respects to Sir John and me, he went alone, I believe on board the "Vindictive" to do the same.

The Capt. asked him to stop for the déjeuner which he declined, and quite rightly I think for he should

have been asked beforehand. The guns were ~~decease~~ firing and the shells bursting all the day. I was sorry for it; for it looked a little like throwing off, but it was presumed to be in honor of Sir John, or for his pleasure, but it was in worse taste when this was repeated the next day for the amusement of Mr. Foster and his party, and a very bad compliment to Sir John as well as to our French visitors.

I have had the prudence to absent myself again from these exciting scenes by coming up here (tho' it is not such excitement as this that does me much harm, only that I have not yet quite the power to bear it bodily) but tomorrow I return to town for our scientific meeting which is assembled for the purpose of making M. Bérard a corresponding member. He told me he heard we paid much attention to natural history, and gave me a land shell from Madagascar which he says is of extraordinary rarity and highly prized. I considered myself so unworthy of it and told him so in such accents of truth, I suppose, that he looked mortified and distressed, upon which I was obliged to tell him that I should

at least henceforth know how to value it.

Mr Bérard has got three Roman Catholic priests on board for New Zealand, a deplorable importation, he has left one behind. "Ayez grand soin des mes Missionnaires" says Madame Adelaide to all French Captains who leave for foreign parts.

What mischief they are doing. Will England quietly suffer their proceedings at ~~St. Helens~~ ^{Dakilo?}?

If Mr Fensland should be in England when you receive this make our kind regards to him. Tell him Sir John received his letter by Mr Bérard and that we were very happy to have formed his acquaintance. Mr Bérard expresses himself perfectly astonished at the advanced state of things here. It is very clear that with all the abuse of penal colonies the French are nevertheless anxious to form one for themselves. "Voilà nos richesses," I said to him as we passed ^{through} ~~here~~ a gang of prisoners who were basking in the sun after their noon day meal on the ground of the New Governⁿment House. He looked at me to say more and I proceeded to assure him that no abuse, nor imputed opprobrium, nor philosophical speculation would ever put the

inhabitants of a penal colony like this out of humour with this portion of its population, so long as they wanted their labour and were enriched by it.

We are yet in that state; Sydney is passing into another.

James congratulates me on the support Sir John had received from the Government at home; how could they ever expect to keep any Governor in such a place as this if they did not. Sir John has not received his despatches on the subject. We think they are likely to be on board the "Tavarian" convict ship which was to have sailed on the 5th September, and was to bring out Mr ^{Burnett} to be Sheriff in the room of Mr Fraser who is promoted to be Treasurer. Mr ^{Burnett} was turned out of the office of Colonial Sec^y several years before Sir John arrived here to make room, as Col. Arthur's enemies say, for Mr Montague. Strange that he should have been in England to witness the turning out and returning home of him, by whom he was himself suspended. If Mr ^{Burnett} does not arrive within twenty four or perhaps twelve hours he loses his place for the year for the new Sheriff

7
is always obliged to be sworn in on the first
monday in January, and cannot be removed
during the year. In this case (of the
non arrival of Mr Barnett,) Sir John gives
the place of Sheriff for the year to Dr Lumbull,
who would otherwise fall down from Treasurer
to Clerk of the Councils, and this arrangement will
enable Sir John to keep Mr. Henslowe a year longer
in the Clerkship of the Councils.

I do ^{not} agree with Fanny that Sir John will only
be retained a few months longer in his Govern^{ment}
to avoid the appearance of blame. If this were
the case, I would try and bear up a little longer
against my burdens here, and wait to return
with him, but I think it likely they will retain
him to carry through the altered system of
Convict Discipline which he has introduced, and
to carry thro^{ugh} the college, about which he has
at last received despatches, nor can I wish his
recall till these important measures are accom=
plished. I do not at all like leaving him,
and nothing but the necessities of my own state of
health lead me to think of it. He has to deal

with a set of men who would delight to press upon him and me, the more, if they thought I should sink under it. I shall never be able to leave him with comfort, unless he pledges me his word that no conceivable circumstances, no offers of reconciliation and amity in my absence, will lead him to regard and treat them as friends.

Is it a deep sense of personal injury, is it implacable resentment that makes me feel thus? Oh no! It is a deep seated, conscientious knowledge, and conviction that Mr Forster and his party are unworthy of his confidence, are dishonest, base minded, selfish and unfeeling men, without principle without scruple, and almost without shame, where their personal passions and interests are concerned. Abandoning and breaking with their best friends, as soon as their interests clash, though stoutly supporting them in everything before. It is this last property, that of clinging together in everything, which makes them so strong. I will give you an instance, a very recent one, in Mr Montagu, of this want of feeling and principle. "There is a Mr Mainw

here, who came out in the "Fairlie" with us
a friend of Mr Copelands, he has always been
a protege of Mr Montagu, and was for some time
employed in his office. Mr Mairn was attached
to him and considered him his friend, more so
than he considered Sir John, and he has shewn
this preference upon occasions in which his duty
should have led him the other way, a short
time before Mr ^{Montagu's} suspension when Sir ^{John} and he
were still good friends, Sir John was seeking for a
place for Mr Mairn, and thinking of one at a distance
Mr Montagu hoped he would not give it him,
because he said his ^{assistant Colonial} Secretary ^{Mitchell} ~~Mr Mitchell~~
^{might} soon resign, and there was no one he should like
so much to succeed him, and who would be
so useful to him as Mr Mairn. Accordingly
Mr Mairn was kept in reserve. - Well, Sir Montagu
is suspended, and soon after, Mr Mitchell resigns
and Sir John appoints Mr Mairn to his place,
for which he was fitted. Mr Montagu goes
home to England and in the same ship with
him there is a Mr Seymour, a stupid incapable
young man, I understand, who had come out to

the Colony to learn farming and was returning. But this Mr Lyonnex is brother to an Egrevoy of Prince Alberto, and in their way home together, Mr Montagu tells him that the place of Assistant Colonial Secretary will very soon be vacant, and advises him to lose no time in applying for it to Lord Stanley, which the young ^{man} does, and receives a satisfactory answer, all of which I understand has been transmitted to Van Diemens Land on his own authority. Thus Mr Montagu to increase his own interest with Lord Stanley thro' Prince Albert treacherously throws his friend Mr Mairn who was devoted to him, overboard. And I have no doubt he had another motive, — he knew Mr Lyonnex to be utterly unfitted for the office, and that he would embarrass any Colonial Secretary, instead of helping him, and so help to embarrass Sir John, than which he desires nothing better, we so much. Look, Mary at your touchingly dejected, quiet and polite Mr Montagu, as Fanny describes him, see him in his true colours; everybody here, cries, shame upon him for this fact. Poor, Mr Mairn, looks hurt and dejected; he

say nothing, and I daresay long for some
excuse for believing that his devotion to Mr. Montagu
has not been cast away on a faithless and treacherous
protector. But whatever you or Fanny may
think of Mr. Montagu no one here, is surprised at it.

They have seen such things before and they cry
shame in the ears of poor Mr. Havin, who has
not yet however received official notice of his
disgrace.

I see no objection to your having shown
some papers to Dr. Dunn. Mr. Gell's letters would
have been the best though I think they require
verbal explanation also; and when a subject
has become so notorious as to appear in London
papers, it is time and it is necessary to give
up all idea of reserve. I have been much
shocked to find in a bundle of English papers
brought out by the surgeon of the last convict
ship, and given to Sir John, a London paper
called the Australasian Record, (a well known
paper) containing whole columns of the abuse
of the Van Diemens Land Chronicle of a year ago

of me. It appears in London in August, and it comes out again to me in December.

Is it not shocking that these vile and destructive falsehoods (which nobody however can tell are such, for there is nothing incredible that I write articles in the Newspapers and interfere in the Governⁿment) should be all published again in London, to be read and commented upon by everyone? is it not enough to make one feel I have not a friend in the World, in either hemisphere, when such things remain uncontradicted? This is a state of things I never contemplated. I can bear well enough to be slandered in Van Diemensland where the secret history of everything is pretty well known, and where men are cowards and dastards because they dread to be put into the Newspapers themselves and where the mind is strengthened by ^{contempt} ~~contempt~~, but in England too? Is there no refuge?

Lord Stanley ought to have had his attention drawn to these things, with an assurance that they were the most impudent, and grossest of lies

and what is of equal importance that they are written with the single object ~~of~~^{of} serving Mr Montagu, by his friend and agent; (an unprincipled Lawyer). x x x x x

I send you Mr^r Burns letter which was omitted in the last. x x x x x

You recollect Sir J. Hammett; he came here in the "Vindictive" and has been very kind to me in my illness giving me a long letter of advice and prescription. He would have taken great care of me had I gone home in that ship. Tell him of the obligation I feel under to him and the value I put on his instructions for I know he expects to hear this from you. In the same ship goes home Mr. Hill, a visitor now to this Colony, but once a resident Post officer (being an old Lieut in the navy) under Col. Arthur. He is a clever and amiable man, and appears to be attached to us both, and he seems to be most anxious to know you. Be as kind to him, and Sir J. H. ^{amett} as you can.

I shall I believe send by Mr Hill the portrait of Mathinna which I mentioned. x x x x x